## I. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~preventing or~~ reducing ~~the degenerative effects on~~ degeneration of the cartilaginoid matrix comprising administering to a subject with arthritis an effective amount of one or more compounds or salts thereof having the following formula:

$$A\text{-}(B)_{b0}\text{-}(C)_{c0}\text{-}N(O)_S \qquad (I)$$

wherein:

s is an integer and is equal to 1 or 2;

c0 is an integer and is equal to 0 or 1;

b0 is an integer and is 0 or 1; with the proviso that at least one of c0 and b0 is different from zero;

A = R-$T_1$-, wherein

R- is the radical of a non steroidal antiinflammatory precursor drug excluding the compounds having 2-oxo-1H-indolic structure, or the radical of a non steroidal antiinflammatory/analgesic drug;

$T_1$ = $(CO)_t$ or $(X)_{t'}$, wherein X = -O-, -S-, -N($R_{1C}$)-, $R_{1C}$ is H or $C_1$-$C_5$ linear or branched alkyl, t and t' are integers and equal to zero or 1, with the proviso that t = 1 when t' = 0; t = 0 when t' = 1;

B = -$T_B$-$X_2$-$T_{BI}$- wherein

$T_B$ and $T_{BI}$ are equal or different;

$T_B$= (CO) when the reactive function in the precursor drug is -OH or –NH($R_{1C}$); $T_B$ = X, as above, when the reactive function in the precursor drug is -COOH;

$T_{BI}$ = $(CO)_{tx}$ or $(X)_{txx}$, wherein tx and txx have the value of 0 or 1; with the proviso that tx = 1 when txx = 0, tx = 0 when txx = 1; X is as above;

$X_2$ is a bivalent linking group as defined below;

C is the bivalent radical -$T_c$-Y- wherein

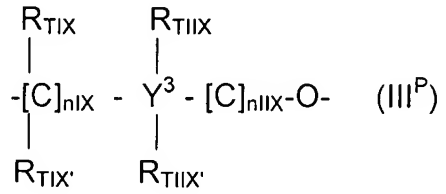
when b0 = c0 = 1: $T_C$ = (CO) when tx = 0, $T_C$ = X when txx = 0, X being as above;

when b0 = 0: $T_C$ = (CO) when t = 0, $T_C$ = X when t' = 0, X being as above;

when c0 = 0: tx = 0, $T_{BI}$ = X = -O- ;

Y is:

$Y_p$:



$(III^P)$

wherein:

nIX is an integer from 0 to 10;

nIIX is an integer from 1 to 10;

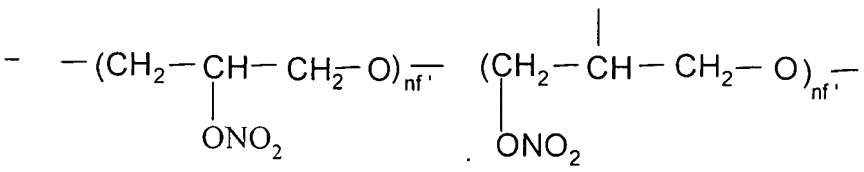
$R_{TIX}$, $R_{TIX'}$, $R_{TIIX}$, $R_{TIIX'}$, equal to or different from each other are H or $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched alkyl;

$Y^3$ is a saturated, unsaturated or aromatic heterocyclic ring containing one or two nitrogen atoms having 5 or 6 atoms,

or Y can be:

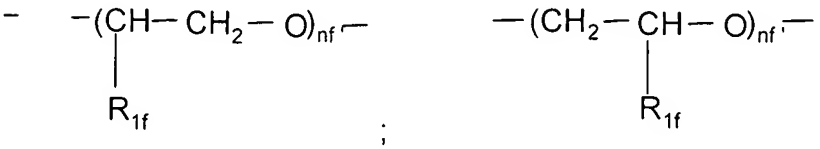
$Y_0$, selected from the following:

- a –R'O– alkylenoxy group wherein R' is linear or branched when possible $C_1$-$C_{20}$, or a cycloalkylene having from 5 to 7 carbon atoms, in the cycloalkylene ring one or more carbon atoms can be substituted by heteroatoms, the ring can have side chains of R' type, R' being as above; or one of the following groups:



;

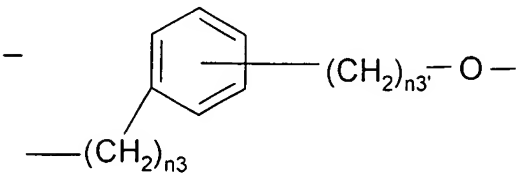
wherein nf' is an integer from 1 to 6;



;

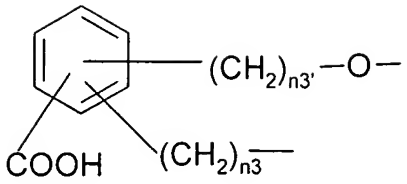
wherein $R_{1f}$ = H, $CH_3$ and nf' is an integer from 1 to 6;

or Y is $Y_{Ar}$ and is selected from the following:



wherein n3 is an integer from 0 to 3 and n3' is an integer from 1 to

3;




wherein n3 and n3' have the above meaning;

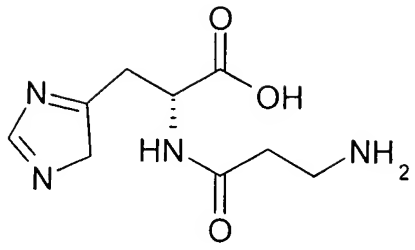
$X_2$, bivalent radical is such that the corresponding precursor of B, $-T_B-X_2-T_{BI}-$ wherein the free valences of $T_B$ and of $T_{BI}$ are saturated each with OZ, with Z or with $-N(Z^I)(Z^{II})$, wherein Z = H or $C_1$-$C_{10}$ linear or branched alkyl, $Z^I$, $Z^{II}$ equal or different have the Z values as above, depending on that $T_B$ and/or $T_{BI}$ = CO or X, in function of the values of t, t', tx and txx;

the precursor of B is selected from the following:

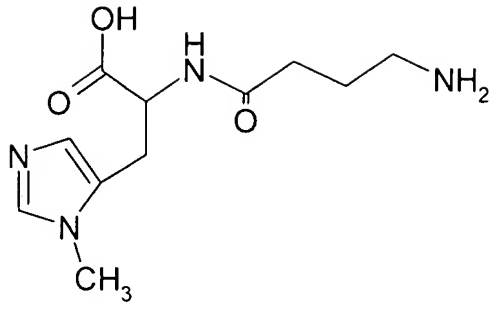
- aminoacids,
- hydroxyacids,
- aromatic and heterocyclic mono- and polyalchols,
- compounds containing at least one free acid function.

2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the precursor of B is selected from the following:

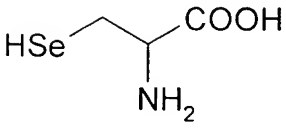
- aminoacids selected from the following: L-carnosine (formula CI), anserine (CII), selenocysteine (CIII), selenomethionine (CIV), penicillamine (CV), N-acetylpenicillamine (CVI), cysteine (CVII), N-acetylcysteine (CVIII), glutathione (CIX) or esters thereof



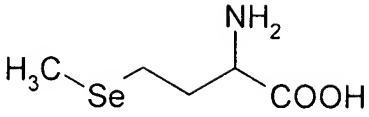
(CI)



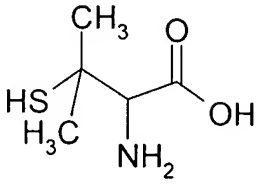
(CII)



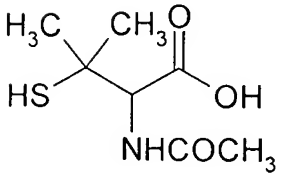
(CIII)



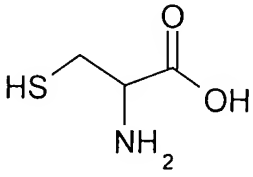
(CIV)



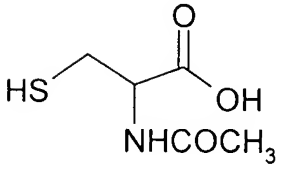
(CV)



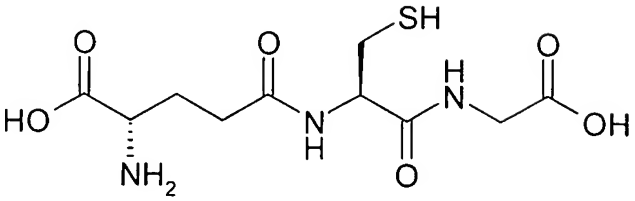
(CVI)



(CVII)



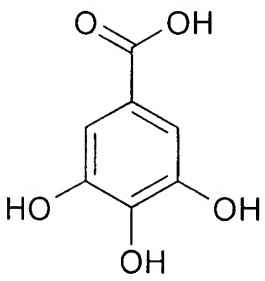
(CVIII)



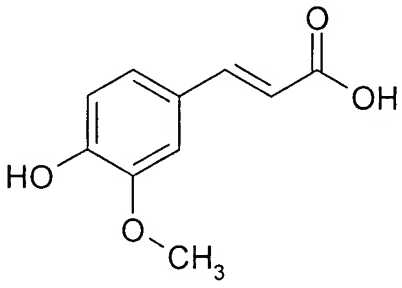
(CIX)

- hydroxyacids, selected from the following: gallic acid (formula DI), ferulic acid (DII), gentisic acid (DIII), citric acid (DIV), caffeic acid (DV), dihydrocaffeic acid (DVI), p-cumaric acid (DVII), vanillic acid (DVIII):

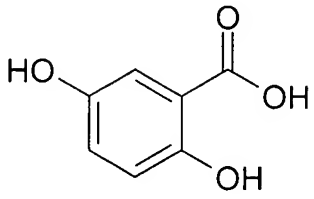
-



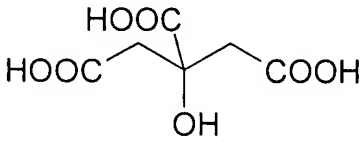
(DI)



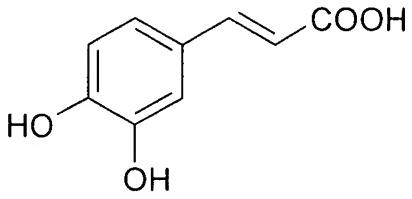
(DII)



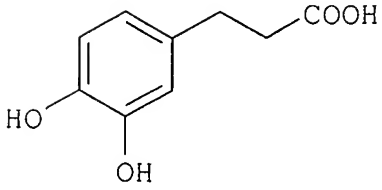
(DIII)



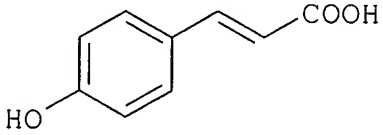
(DIV)



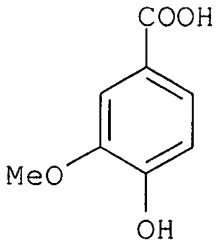
(DV)



(DVI)

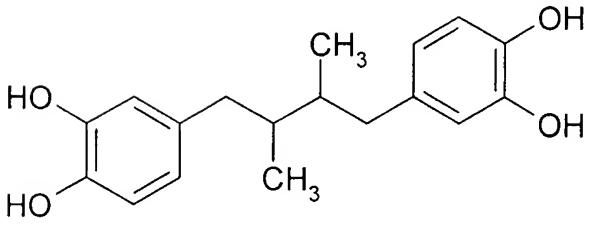


(DVII)

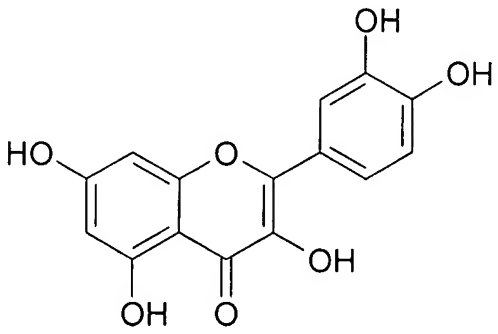


(DVIII)

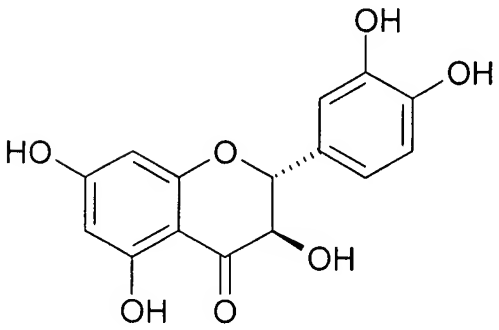
- aromatic and heterocyclic mono- and polyalcohols, selected from the following: nordihydroguaiaretic acid (EI), quercetin (EII), catekin (EIII), kaempferol (EIV), sulphurethyne (EV), hydroquinone (EVIII), gossypol (EIX), reductic acid (EX), methoxyhydroquinone (EXI), hydroxyhydroquinone (EXII), propyl gallate (EXIII), 3,5-di-ter-butyl-4-hydroxybenzyl-thioglycolate (EXXIV), allopurinol (EXXXI); saccharose (EC), ascorbic (ECI) and isoascorbic acid (ECII), p-cumaric alcohol (ECIII), 4-hydroxy-phenylethylalcohol (ECIV), coniferyl alcohol (ECV):



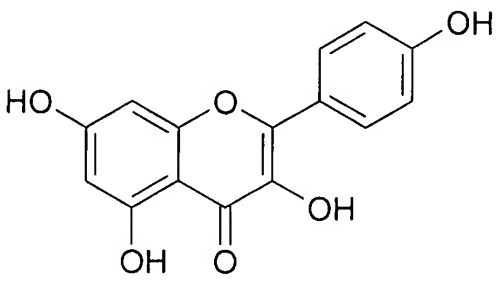

(EI)



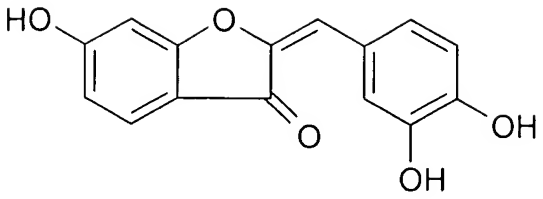

(EII)



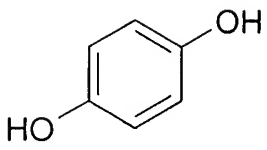

(EIII)




(EIV)



(EV)



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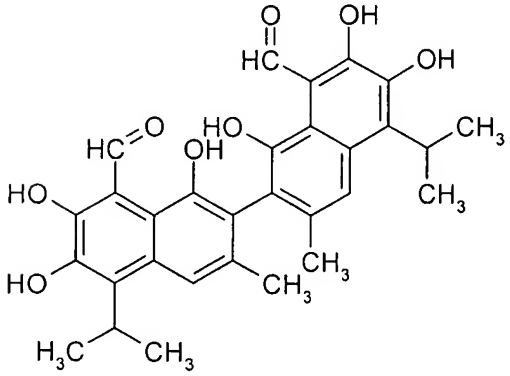
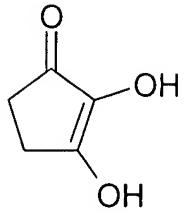
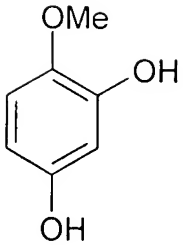


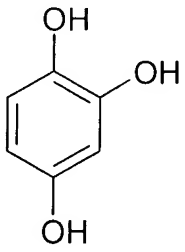
(EIX)



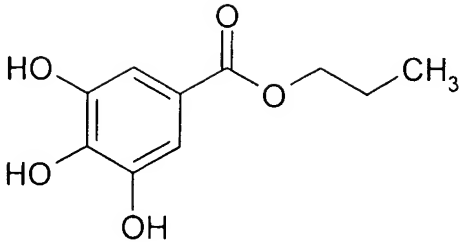
(EX)



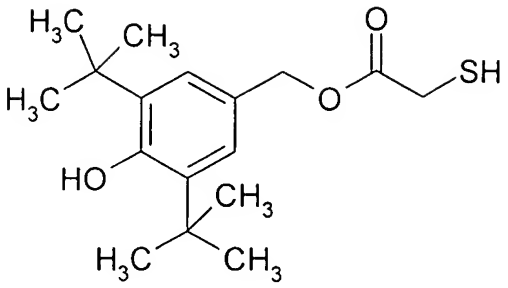
(EXI)



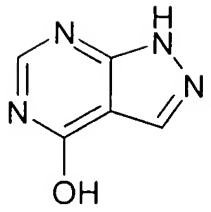
(EXII)



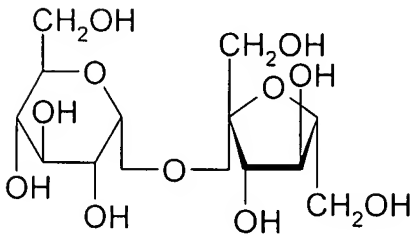
(EXIII)



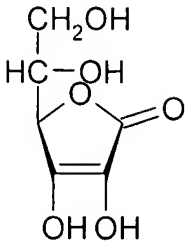
(EXXIV)



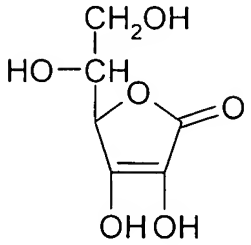
(EXXXI)



(EC)



(ECI)



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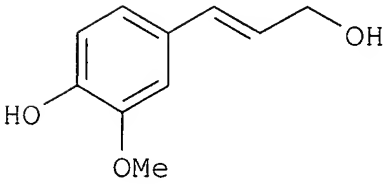
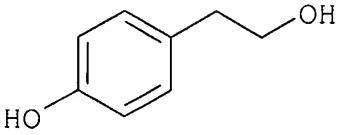
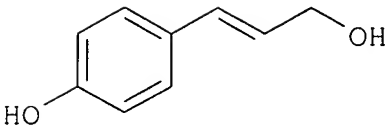


(ECIII)

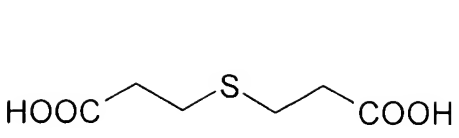


(ECIV)

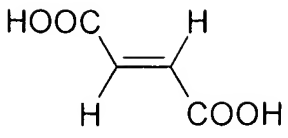


(ECV)

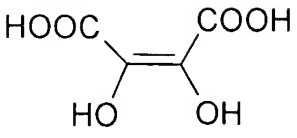
- compounds containing at least one free acid function, selected from the following: 3,3'-thiodipropionic acid (NI), fumaric acid (NII), dihydroxymaleic acid (NIII), edetic acid (NV):



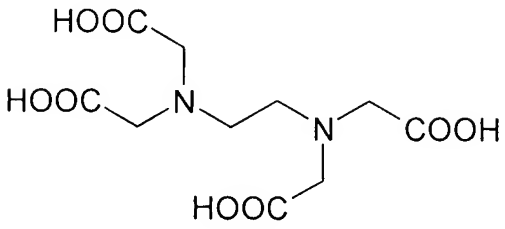

(NI)




(NII)




(NIII)




(NV)

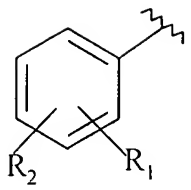
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein in the compounds of formula (I):

- when b0 = c0 = 1, the bonds between the drug radical and $X_2$ and between $X_2$ and Y are, independently the one from the other, of ester, thioester, amide type;
- when b0 = 0 and c0 = 1 the bond between the drug radical and Y is of ester, thioester, amide type.

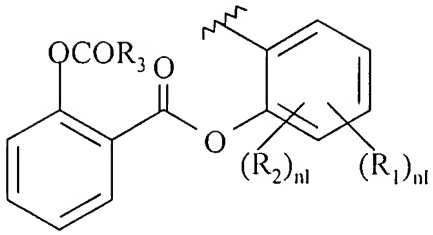
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the R radical is selected from the following groups:

Group I)

Ia)



Ib)



wherein:

$R_1$ is H or -$OCOR_3$; wherein $R_3$ is methyl, ethyl or $C_3$-$C_5$ linear or branched alkyl, or the residue of an heterocycle with only one ring having 5 or 6 atoms partially or totally hydrogenated, or aromatic, containing one or more heteroatoms independently selected from O, N and S;

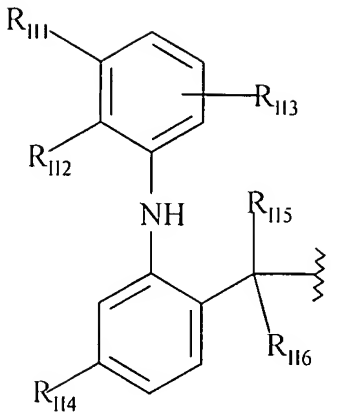
$R_2$ is hydrogen, hydroxy, halogen, $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched alkoxyl; a $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched perfluoroalkyl ~~perluoroalkyl~~; nitro, amino, mono- or di-($C_{1-4}$) alkylamino;

with the proviso that in formula Ia) $R_1$ and $R_2$ are not contemporaneously H;

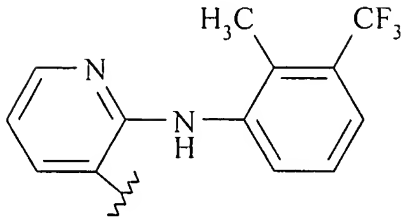
in formula Ib) nI is an integer 0 or 1;

Group II)

IIa)




IIb)




wherein:

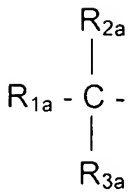
$R_{II5}$ is H, $C_1$-$C_3$ linear or branched alkyl;

$R_{II6}$ has the same meaning as $R_{II5}$, or when $R_{II5}$ is H it is benzyl;

$R_{II1}$, $R_{II2}$ and $R_{II3}$ are independently hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_6$ linear or branched alkyl, or $C_1$-$C_6$ linear or branched alkoxy, or Cl, F, Br;

$R_{II4}$ is $R_{II1}$ or bromine;

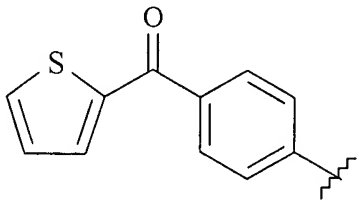
IIb) is the residue of the 2-[(2-methyl-3-(trifluoro methyl)phenyl]amino]-3-pyridincarboxylic] acid when $T_1$ = -CO- and the free valence is saturated with OH the compound is known as flunixin;



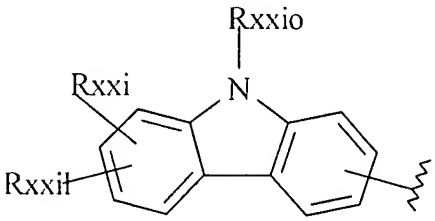
wherein:

$R_{2a}$ and $R_{3a}$ are H, $C_1$-$C_{12}$ linear or branched, substituted or not, alkyl or allyl, with the proviso that when one of the two is allyl the other is H;

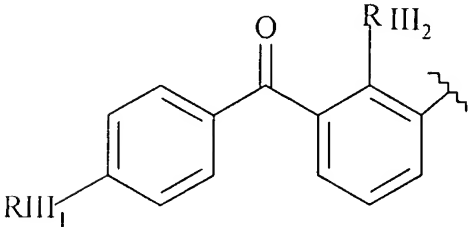
$R_{1a}$ is selected from:



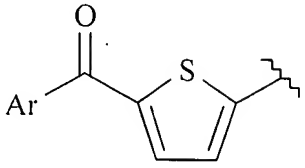
(II)



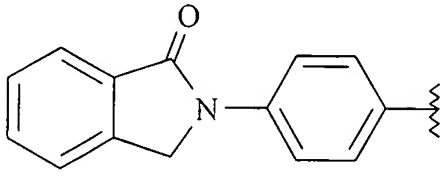
(XXI)



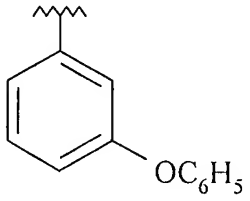
(IV)



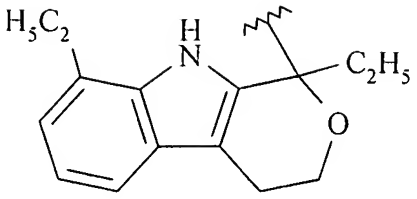
(XXXV)



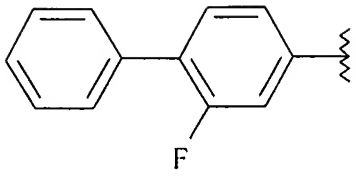
(VI)



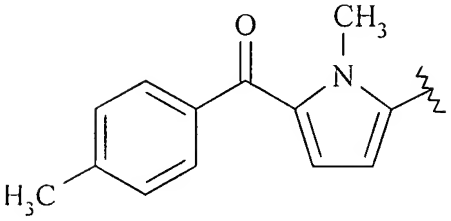
(VII)



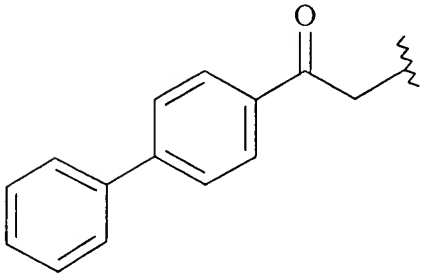
(VIII)



(IX)

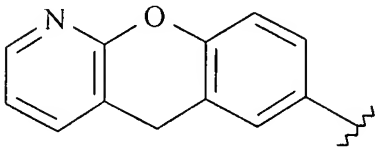


(X)

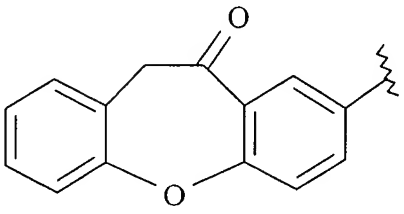


(III)

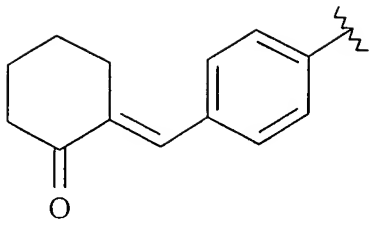
IIID) $R_{1a}$ corresponds to the following formulas:



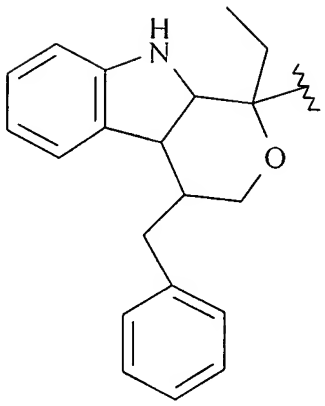
(IIIa)



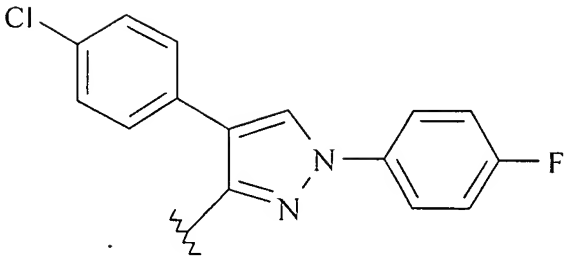
(XXX)



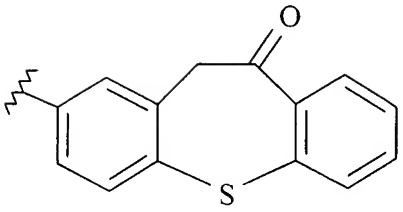
(XXXI)



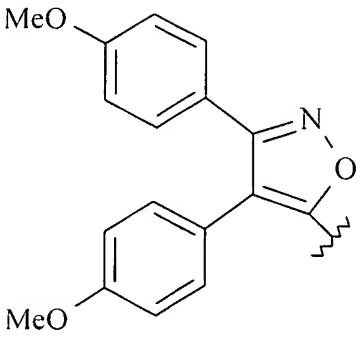
(XXXII)



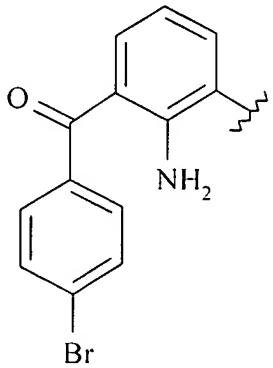
(XXXIII)



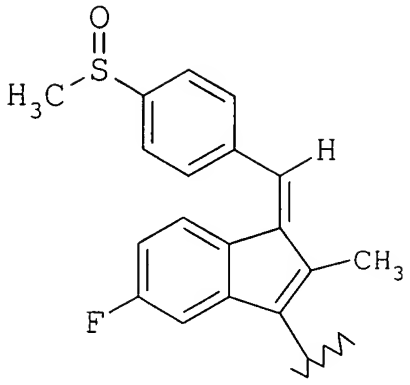
(XXXVI)



(XXXVII)



(XII)



(XXXX)

wherein the meanings are the following:

- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (IV), Ketoprofen residue:

  $R_{III1}$ is H, $SR_{III3}$ wherein $R_{III3}$ is $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched alkyl;

  $R_{III2}$ is H, hydroxy;

- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (XXI), carprofen residue:

  $R_{xxio}$ is H, alkyl from 1 to 6 C atoms linear or branched, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkoxycarbonyl linked to a $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl, $C_1$-$C_6$ carboxyalkyl, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkanoyl, optionally substituted with halogens, benzyl or halobenzyl, benzoyl or halobenzoyl;

  $R_{xxi}$ is H, halogen, hydroxy, CN, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl containing or not containing OH groups, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkoxy, acetyl, benzyloxy, $SR_{xxi2}$ wherein $R_{xxi2}$ is $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl; $C_1$-$C_3$ perfluoroalkyl; $C_1$-$C_6$ carboxyalkyl containing or not containing OH groups, $NO_2$, amino; sulphamoyl, di-alkyl sulphamoyl with $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl, or difluoroalkylsulphonyl with $C_1$-$C_3$ alkyl;

$R_{xxi1}$ is halogen, CN, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl containing one or more OH groups, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkoxy, acetyl, acetamido, benzyloxy, $SR_{III3}$ being $R_{III3}$ as above, $C_1$-$C_3$ perfluoroalkyl, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_6$ carboxyalkyl, $NO_2$, amino, $C_1$-$C_6$ mono- or di-alkyl-amino; sulphamoyl, $C_1$-$C_6$ di-alkyl-sulphamoyl, or di-fluoroalkylsulphamoyl as above; or $R_{xxi}$ together with $R_{xxi1}$ is a $C_1$-$C_6$ alkylen-dioxy;

- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (XXXV) tiaprofenic acid residue: Ar is phenyl, hydroxyphenyl optionally mono- or polysubstituted with halogen, alkanoyl and $C_1$-$C_6$ alkoxy, $C_1$-$C_6$ trialkyl, cyclohexyl, cycloheptyl, heteroaryl, furyl containing or not containing OH, pyridyl;
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (II), suprofen residue, $R_{3a}$ is H, $R_{2a}$ is methyl and $T_1$ = -CO-;
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (VI), R is the residue of indoprofen when $T_1$ = -CO-, $R_{2a}$ = H and $R_{3a} = CH_3$; of indobufen when $R_{2a}$ is equal to H and $R_{3a} = C_2H_5$; $T_1$ = -CO-;
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (VIII), R is the etodolac residue when $R_{2a} = R_{3a}$ = H and $T_1$ = -CO-;
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (VII), R is the fenoprofen residue when $R_{3a}$ = H, $R_{2a} = CH_3$ and $T_1$ = -CO-;
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (III), R is the fenbufen residue when $R_{2a} = R_{3a}$ = H and $T_1$ = -CO-;

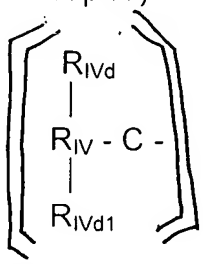
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (IX), R is the flurbiprofen residue when $R_{3a}$ = H, $R_{2a}$ = $CH_3$, $T_1$ = -CO-;
- when $R_{1a}$ is as defined in formula (X) R is the tolmetin residue when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H, $T_1$ = -CO-.

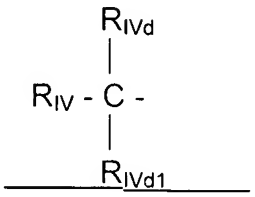
In group IIID) $R_{1a}$ corresponds to the following formulas:

- IIIa), when $R_{2a}$ = H and $R_{3a}$ = $CH_3$ the pranoprofen residue is obtained: α-methyl-5H-[1]benzopyran-[2,3-b]pyridin-7-acetic acid;
- (XXX), when $R_{2a}$ = H and $R_{3a}$ = $CH_3$ the bermoprofen residue is obtained: dibenz[b,f]oxepin-2-acetic acid;
- (XXXI), when $R_{2a}$ = H and $R_{3a}$ = $CH_3$, R is the radical of the compound CS-670: 2-[4-(2-oxo-1-cyclohexyliden methyl) phenyl]propionic acid;
- (XXXII), when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H, the pemedolac residue is obtained; when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H $T_1$ = -CO-;
- (XXXIII), when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H, the pirazolac residue is obtained: 4-(4-chlorophenyl)-1-(4-fluorophenyl)-3-pyrazol acid derivatives;
- (XXXVI), when $R_{2a}$ = H, $R_{3a}$ = $CH_3$ the zaltoprofen residue is obtained; when the residue is saturated with an hydroxyl or aminic group, or with the carboxylic function the compounds are known as dibenzotiepin derivatives;
- (XXXVII), when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H the mofezolac residue is obtained: 3,4-di(p-methoxyphenyl)isoxazol-5-acetic acid when the residue is $CH_2$-COOH;
- (XII), when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H the bromfenac residue is obtained: 2-amino-3-(4-bromobenzoyl)benzeneacetic acid;

- (XXXX) when $R_{2a}$ = $R_{3a}$ = H the sulindac residue is obtained: (Z)-5-fluoro-2-methyl-1-[[4-(methyl sulphinyl) –phenyl]methylene]-1H-inden-3-acetic acid;

in Group IV) R is

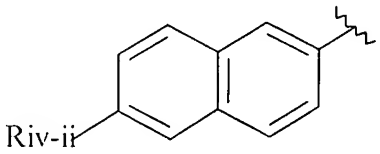


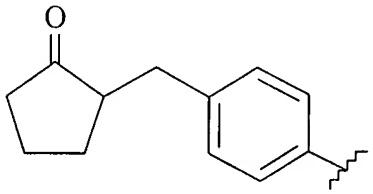

wherein:

$R_{IVd}$ and $R_{IVd1}$ are at least one H and the other an alkyl from $C_1$ to $C_6$ linear or branched, or difluoroalkyl with $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl, or $R_{IVd}$ and $R_{IVd1}$ form together a methylene group;

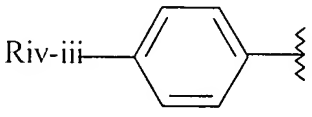
$R_{IV}$ has the following meaning;




(IIB)




(XB)




(IIIB)

wherein the compounds of group IV) have the following meanings:

- in formula (IIB):

  $R_{iV\text{-}ii}$ is $C_1$-$C_6$ alkyl, $C_3$-$C_7$ cycloalkyl, $C_1$-$C_7$ alkoxymethyl, $C_1$-$C_3$ trifluoroalkyl, vinyl, ethynyl, halogen, $C_1$-$C_6$ alkoxy, difluoroalkoxy with $C_1$-$C_7$ alkyl, $C_1$-$C_7$ alkoxymethyloxy, alkylthiomethyloxy with $C_1$-$C_7$ alkyl, alkyl methylthio with $C_1$-$C_7$ alkyl, cyano, difluoromethylthio, phenyl- or phenylalkyl substituted with the $C_1$-$C_8$ alkyl; $T_1$ = -CO-;

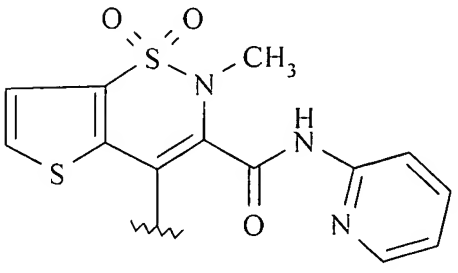
- in formula (XB), of which the loxoprofen residue has been indicated, the compounds wherein $R_{IVd}$ is H and $R_{IVd1}$ is $CH_3$;

- in formula (IIIB):

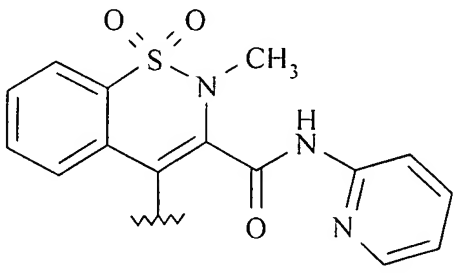
  $R_{iV\text{-}iii}$ is a $C_2$-$C_5$ branched or not branched alkyl, $C_2$ and $C_3$ alkyloxy, allyloxy, phenoxy, phenylthio, cycloalkyl from 5 to 7 C atoms, optionally substituted in position 1 by a $C_1$-$C_2$ alkyl;

  and $R_{IVd}$ = H, $R_{IVd1}$ is $CH_3$, compound known as ibuprofen residue, $T_1$ = -CO-;

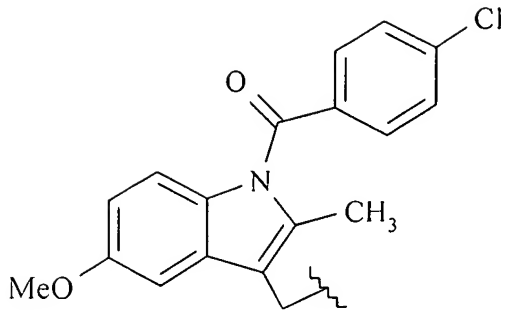
Group V)



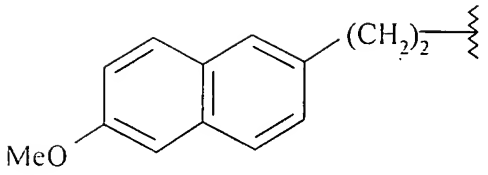
(VIIC)



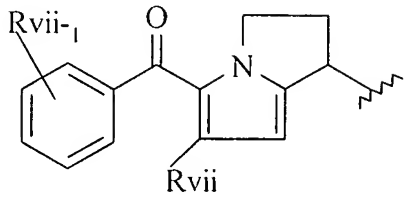
(IXC)



(IVC)

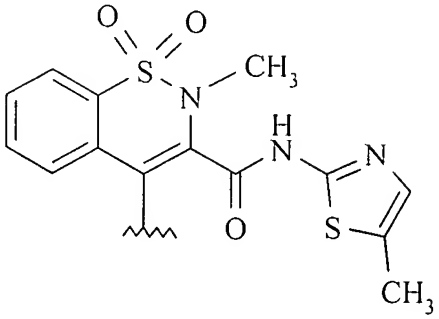


(IIIC)

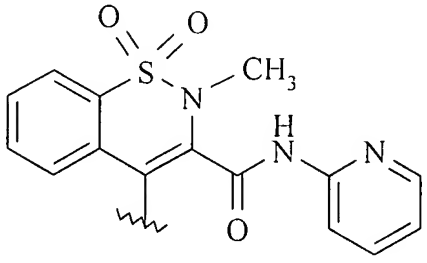


(IIC)

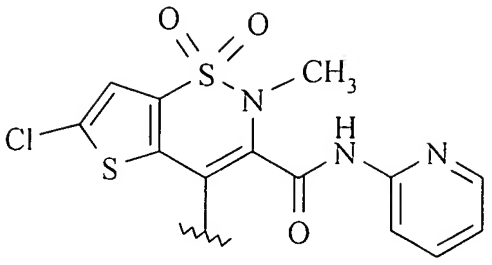
Group VE)



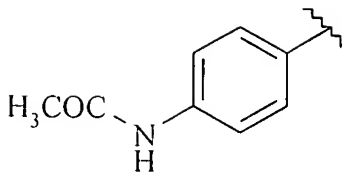
(XC)



(XI)



(XIII)



(XXXXV)

In group V), the compounds have the following meanings:

- when R is the formula (IIC),

  $R_{Vii}$ is H or a $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched alkyl;

  $R_{Vii-1}$ is $R_{Vii}$, or $C_1$-$C_4$ linear or branched alkoxy; Cl, F, Br; the position of $R_{Vii-1}$ being ortho, or meta, or para;

- when R is the formula (VIIC),

  of which the tenoxicam residue has been indicated, $T_1$ = -O-;

- when R is the formula (IXC),

  wherein $T_1$ = -O-, the piroxicam residue has been indicated;

- when R is the formula (IIIC),

  wherein $T_1$ = -CO-, of which the nabumetone residue has been indicated;

- when R is the formula (IVC),

  wherein $T_1$ = -CO-, of which the indomethacin residue has been indicated;

- when R is the formula (XC), the residue X is known as meloxicam;

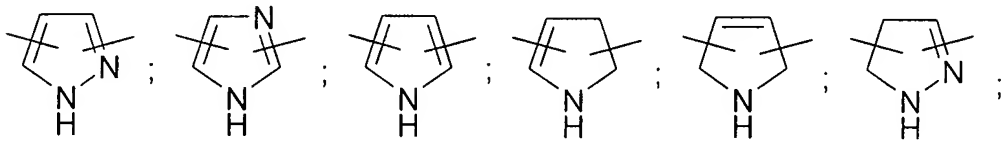
- when R is the formula (XI) the residue is known as ampiroxicam when the termination is $-CH(CH_3)OCOC_2H_5$;

- when R is the formula (XIII) and the valence is saturated with H, the

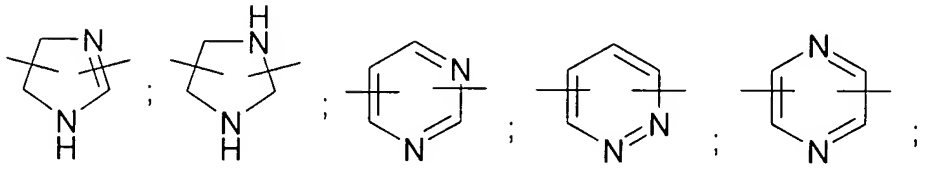
residue derives from lornoxicam;

- when R is the formula (XXXXV), $T_1$ = -O- and the valence is saturated with H, the compound known as paracetamol is obtained.

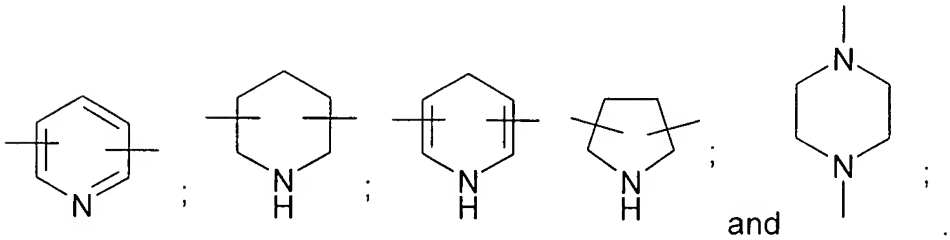
5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein in the compounds of formula (I) $Y^3$ of formula ($III^P$) of C is selected from the following bivalent radicals:



(Y1) (Y2) (Y3) (Y4) (Y5) (Y6)



(Y7) (Y8) (Y9) (Y10) (Y11)



(Y12) (Y13) (Y14) (Y15) and (Y16)

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein $Y^3$ is selected from the following:

(Y12) with the two free valences in the ortho positions with respect to the nitrogen

atom; (Y16) with the two valences linked to the two heteroatoms, Y1 (pyrazol) 3,5-disubstituted.

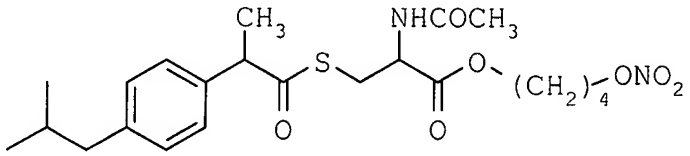
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the compounds or salts thereof of formula (I) are selected from the group consisting of:

2-acetyloxybenzoic acid 3-nitrooxymethyl phenyl ester ($I^C$);

2-fluoro-alpha-methyl[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-acetic acid 4-ni-trooxy butylester ($II^C$);

2-[(2,6-dichlorophenyl)amino]benzenacetic acid 4-ni-trooxy butyl ester ($III^C$);

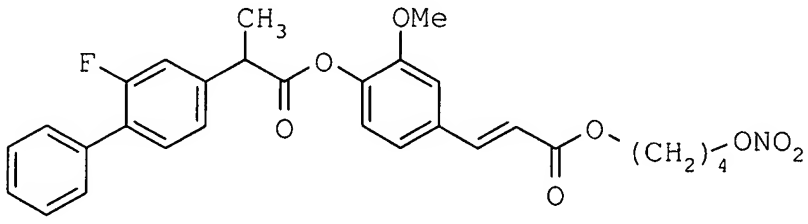
(S)-N-acetyl-[alpha-methyl-4-(2-methylpropyl)benzen-acetyl] cysteine 4-nitrooxybutylester having formula:



($IV^C$)

4-nitrooxybutanoic acid 4-acetylaminophenylester ($V^C$);

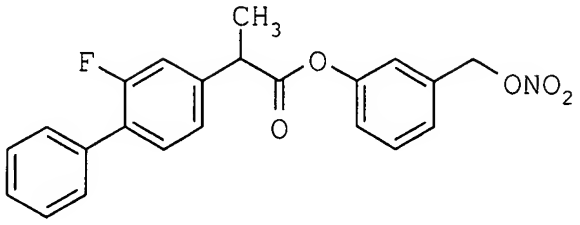
trans-3-[4-[2-fluoro-alpha-methyl(1,1'-biphenyl)-4-acetyloxy]-3-methoxyphenyl]-2-propenoic acid 4-(nitrooxy) butyl ester, having formula:



;

(VI$^C$)

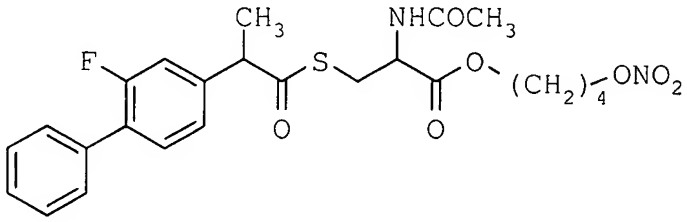
2-Fluoro-alpha-methyl[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-acetic acid 3-(ni-trooxymethyl)phenyl ester having formula:



;

(VII$^C$)

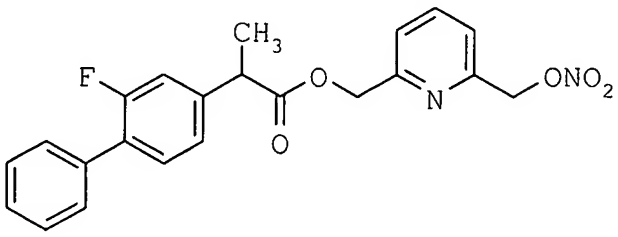
(S)-N-acetyl-[2-fluoro-alpha-methyl(1,1'-biphenyl)-4-acetyl] cysteine 4-(nitrooxy)butyl ester having formula:



;

(VIII$^C$)

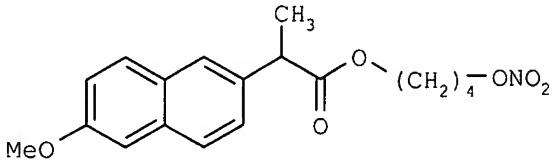
2-Fluoro-alpha-methyl[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-acetic acid 6-(nitrooxy methyl)-2-methylpyridyl ester having formula



;

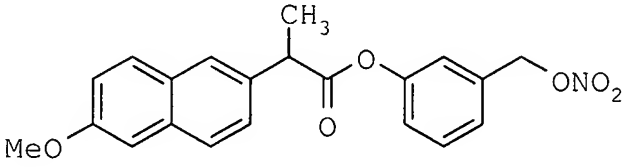
(XI$^C$)

(S)-6-methoxy-alpha-methyl-2-naphthalenacetic acid 4-(nitrooxy)butyl ester having formula :



($X^C$);

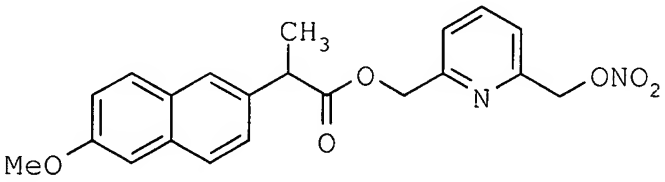
(S)-6-methoxy-alpha-methyl-2-naphthalenacetic acid 3-(nitrooxymethyl)phenyl ester having formula:



;

($XI^B$)

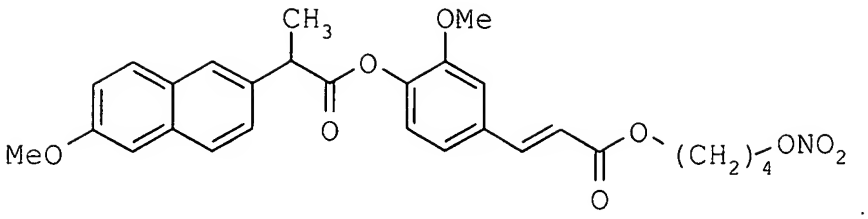
(S)-6-methoxy-alpha-methyl-2-naphthalenacetic acid 6-(nitrooxymethyl)-2-methylpyridyl ester having formula:



;

($XII^C$)

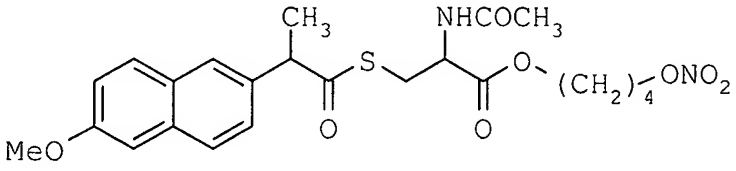
trans-3-[4-[6-methoxy-alpha-methyl-2-naphthalenacetyl oxy]-3-methoxyphenyl]-2-propenoic acid 4-(nitrooxy)butyl ester having formula:



;

(XIII$^C$)

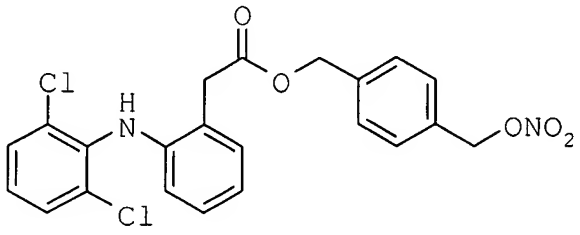
(S,S)-N-acetyl-S-(6-methoxy-alpha-methyl-2-naphthaleneacetyl) cysteine 4-(nitrooxy)butyl ester having formula:



;

(XIV$^C$)

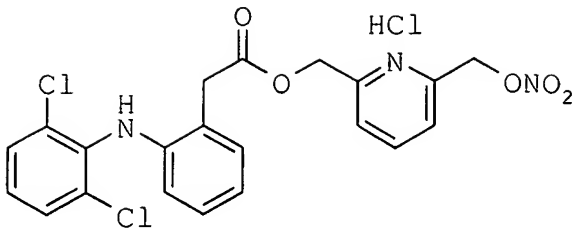
2-[(2,6-dichlorophenyl)amino]benzenacetic acid 4-(nitrooxy methyl)phenylmethyl ester having formula:



;

(XV$^C$)

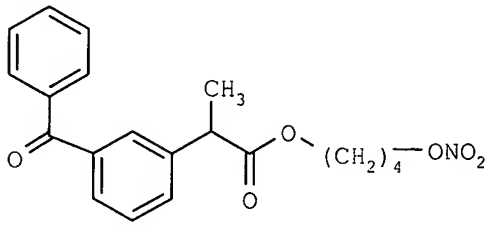
2-[(2,6-dichlorophenyl)amino]benzenacetic acid 6-(nitrooxymethyl)-2-methylpyridyl hydrochloride ester having formula:




;

(XVI$^C$)

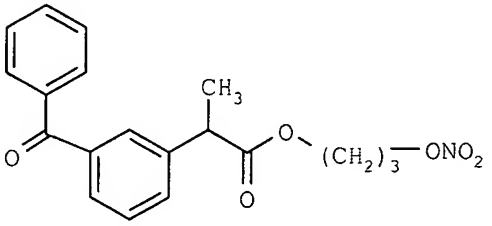
(S)-3-benzoyl-alpha-methyl-benzenacetic acid 4-(nitro oxybutyl) ester having formula:




;

(XVII$^C$)

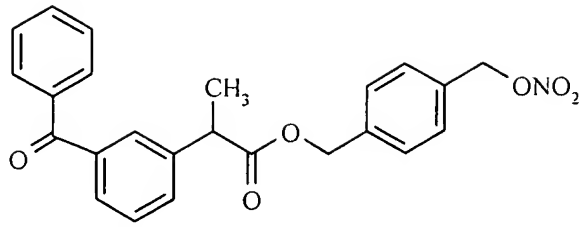
(S)-3-benzoyl-alpha-methyl-benzenacetic acid 3-(nitro oxypropyl) ester having formula:




;

(XVIII$^C$)

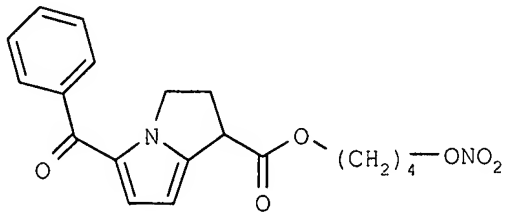
(S)-3-benzoyl-alpha-methyl-benzenacetic 4-(nitro oxymethyl) phenylmethyl ester having formula:




;

(XIX$^C$)

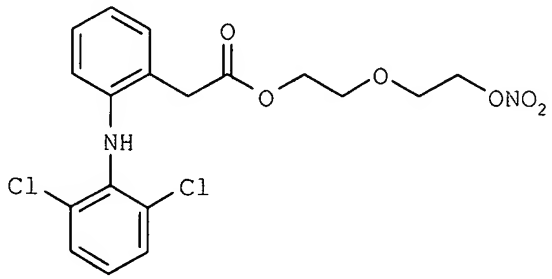
5-benzoyl-2,3-dihydro-1H-pyrrolizine-1-carboxylic acid 4-(nitrooxy)butyl ester having formula:




;

(XXI$^C$)

2-[(2,6-dichlorophenyl)amino]benzenacetic acid 5 (nitro oxy)ethyloxyethyl ester having formula:




(XX$^C$)

1-(4-Chlorobenzoyl)-5-methoxy-2-methyl-1H-indole-3-acetic acid 3-(nitrooxymethyl)phenyl ester (XXI$^C$).

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the compounds or salts thereof of formula (I) are administered by oral, parenteral or topical administration.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein relapses of ~~degenerative effects on~~ degeneration of the cartilaginoid matrix in subjects with arthritis are reduced ~~prevented~~.